

511 It is seen that the per family average annual expenditure is Rs.909-00 nP. in Border areas, Rs.1008 00 nP. in Project area and Rs.828-00 nP. in General area. The per family annual net income in the respective area being Rs.852-86 nP., Rs.988-84 nP., and Rs.949-51 nP. it follows that the budget of the average family is deficit in all the areas.

[426] This deficit is usually made up either by restricting the consumption expenditure during the lean months of the agricultural year or by taking loans.

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511 The field work of the survey was started during the month of February, i.e., hardly after two months, of harvesting of winter paddy and during the harvesting period of cash crops like orange, betelnut, potatoes, etc. During this period people get money through the sale proceeds and naturally they were tempted to spend comparatively higher amount on food. In fact, it was made clear during investigation that as lean months are approaching when people did not have money to purchase food articles, they used to lead a very austere life. This period is particularly very hard for the Border people because unlike people of other two areas they do not have even paddy in store. As the above figures of annual expenditure of a family were calculated on the basis of information collected for one month preceding the date of investigation, in respect of food and non-food articles, and for one year in respect of miscellaneous items, there is every likelihood of the average per family expenditure on food and non-food articles being over-estimated.

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511 As in the case of income, consumption of articles produced at home or at farm as well as those received out of the goods, services and gift and loan were valued in money terms on the basis of the local average retail prices in respect of the commodities concerned. Thus even firewood and other wild vegetables and fishes obtained by fishing were valued in terms of money. Of the total average expenditure on food, the food articles obtained in kind and consumed at home account for about 18 per cent in Border area, 53 per cent in Project area and 57 per cent in General area. Thus the share of food articles obtained in kind and consumed at home to the annual expenditure of a family is very low in Border area. This is natural because they depend almost exclusively on cash crop cultivation.

511 Out of the total expenditure, food account for about 68 per cent in Border area, 67 per cent in Project area and 73 per cent in General area. In all the areas cereals alone took the bulk of the expenditure on food, i.e., 66 per cent, 75 per cent and 81 per cent in the respective areas

It is seen that expenditure on pulses, vegetables and milk are very low. In fact only a few of the Tribal villagers take pulses, milk and vegetables. Rice and fish or meat are the only items of the dishes of most of the villages.

Among non-food articles fuel and light accounted for 6 per cent in Border area, 5 per cent in Project area, and 5 per cent in General area. Khasis are heavy chewers of betelnut and this accounted for 5 per cent of total annual expenditure in border area, 4 per cent in Project area and about 3 per cent in General area while tobacco and tea in tea-stall accounted for about 5 per cent, 4 per cent and 4 per cent respectively of the total annual expenditure in the three areas. Expenditure on liquor